

APPLICATION
FOR
UNITED STATES LETTERS PATENT

TITLE: HEADPHONING

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TITLE

HEADPHONING

The present invention relates in general to headphoning and more particularly concerns novel headphones especially advantageous in connection with active noise reducing but having features useful in passive headphones. A headset is a pair of headphones interconnected by a headband.

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

For background, reference is made to U.S. Patent Nos. 6,597,792, 5,305,387, 5,208,268, 5,181,252, 4,989,271, 4,922,542, 4,644,581 and 4,455,675. Reference is also made to the commercially available Bose QUIET COMFORT headset and the commercially available QUIET COMFORT 2 headphones. The QUIET COMFORT 2
10 headphones embody the invention disclosed herein and is incorporated by reference herein.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to aspects of the invention, an active noise reducing headset is constructed and arranged with a replaceable battery in one earcup and a detachably
15 securable plug having a switch and an audio cable with a plug at the end for mating engagement with a sound source jack in the other earcup. Both earcups have active noise reduction circuitry. Another feature of the invention is an enclosed headband spring embracing an electrical cable that intercouples electrical elements in the respective earcups. Still another feature of the invention is a loudspeaker driver offset from the
20 center of the earcup adjacent to a printed circuit board carrying circuitry. Still another feature of the invention is a hinged battery access door that when closed is normally covered by the yoke arm assembly that pivotally supports the earcup.

Other features, objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the following detailed description when read in connection with the accompanying
25 drawing, in which:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWING

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a commercially available Bose QUIET COMFORT 2 headphones embodying the invention;

FIG. 2 is a side pictorial view illustrating a feature of the headband cable covered
5 between two sections of flat spring;

FIG. 3 is a pictorial view of an earcup according to the invention showing a feature of the loudspeaker driver off center;

FIG. 4 is a diagrammatic cross-section through an earcup showing the feature of small earcup profile with space for the ear and internal components;

10 FIG. 5 is a pictorial view of an earcup illustrating the feature of the plug assembly with switch hidden;

FIG. 6 is a pictorial view of an earcup yoke assembly showing the feature of the battery door on top protected by the headband yoke with the battery door open;

15 FIG. 7 is a pictorial view of an earcup yoke assembly showing the feature of the battery door on top protected by the headband yoke with the battery door closed; and

FIG. 8 is a pictorial view showing the plug assembly with switch removed from the earcup.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

20 With reference now to the drawing, and more particularly to FIG. 1 thereof, there is shown a perspective view of a commercially available Bose QUIET COMFORT 2 headphones embodying the invention. The headphones include a right earcup 11 and a left earcup 12 intercoupled by a headband 13 with a depending right yoke assembly 14 and left yoke assembly 15. The right earcup 11 includes a switch 16 and an LED 17 that is illuminated when switch 16 is in the on position. Right earcup 11 and left earcup 12
25 include right circumaural cushion 21 and circumaural left cushion 22, respectively.

Referring to FIG. 2, there is shown a pictorial view illustrating the feature of the headband cable 22 interconnecting electrical elements in the earcups covered between sections 23A and 23B of a flat spring that furnishes a clamping force to keep the earcups over the ears of a user. The interconnected electrical elements may comprise switch 16
30 and an electronic circuit board 32 in left earcup 12, and battery 37 in right earcup 11

(FIG. 4). The same reference symbols identify corresponding elements throughout the drawing.

Referring to FIG. 3, there is shown a pictorial view illustrating the feature of loudspeaker driver 31 mounted off-center in the earcup. Printed circuit board 32 is mounted above loudspeaker 31 in left earcup 12 that includes a detachably secured connector 33 with appended cord 34 having a miniature stereo plug (not shown) at the other end for engagement with a mating jack that is connected to a source of audio signals, such as the sound channels in an aircraft or a CD player.

Referring to FIG. 4, there is shown a diagrammatic cross section through an earcup showing the compact earcup profile formed with space for the ear and internal components. Each earcup includes a loudspeaker driver 31 positioned as shown, a microphone 35 positioned as shown, an electronics printed circuit board 32 as shown, a plug assembly in left earcup 12 and a battery 37 in right earcup 11 positioned as shown with the ear 36 accommodated and surrounded by a circumaural ear cushion 21, 22.

Referring to FIG. 5, there is shown a pictorial view of left earcup 12 illustrating the location of plug assembly 33 that carries a high-low switch and is detachably secured to the earcup allowing relatively easy removal to select the switch position or to remove the cord when only noise reducing is desired so that the user may then move about while wearing the headphones illustrated in FIG. 1.

Referring to FIG. 6, there is shown a view of an earcup and yoke arm assembly illustrating how battery 37 is removably seated in earcup 11 with battery access door 41 in the open position. When battery 37 is fully inserted, battery access door 41 closes and is covered by yoke arm assembly 14 when the headphones are positioned on the head of a user with earcups embracing the ears.

Referring to FIG. 7, there is shown the assembly of FIG. 6 with battery access door 41 closed and covered by yoke arm assembly 14.

Referring to FIG. 8, there is shown a view of left earcup 12 with plug assembly 33 removed to illustrate how sensitivity switch 33A is positioned to switch in a resistor for lower sensitivity and switch out the resistor for higher sensitivity (resistor not shown) and section 33B that smoothly covers the opening when plug assembly 33 is fully seated in earcup assembly 12.

The invention has a number of advantages. Locating the battery door on the top of an earcup makes it difficult for a battery to inadvertently fall from the cup with the yoke over the battery door when the headphones are in use for the battery door cannot open. The flat spring for providing clamping force provides a desired clamping force while keeping the width and weight of the spring low. A slot that runs the length of the headband spring conveniently accommodates the wires interconnecting the earcups and may be covered by a protective plastic. The earcups have a relatively small profile while furnishing desired cavity volumes by vertically orienting the battery and attenuator/plug assembly and locating them forward in the earcups such that they are located in a region where there is no intrusion into the front cavity by the user's pinna. When the plug/attenuator assembly is inserted into the earcup, the switch available to control the volume or sensitivity of the headset is covered and not directly accessible by the user where it might be inadvertently switched to a different position. The loudspeaker drivers are offset from the center of the earcup and are located lower in the cup (although higher may be used). Using a round driver in a substantially round earcup and offsetting the driver towards one end or the other allows more room for location of a printed circuit board.

It is evident that those skilled in the art may now make numerous uses and modifications of and departures from the specific apparatus and techniques described herein without departing from the inventive concepts. Consequently, the invention is to be construed as embracing each and every novel feature and novel combination of features present in or possessed by the apparatus and techniques herein disclosed and limited only by the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is: